

Message Text

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TO DOD WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 1022

DOD FOR SECRETARY CLEMENTS FROM AMBASSADOR AKINS

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: APER, SA, MIL

SUBJ: EXTENSION OF SAUDI NATIONAL GUARD PROJECT MANAGER

1. I RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING LETTER DATED JAN 8, FROM HRH PRINCE ABDULLAH, CINC SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD. HE ASKED THAT A COPY BE SENT TO YOU:

"DEAR AMBASSADOR:

"WE HAVE IN THE PAST REQUESTED THE EXTENSION OF THE SERVICES OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF THE U.S. ARMY PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, COL. THOMAS A. MORT.

"WE WISH TO ASSURE YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT THIS SUBJECT IS OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE, IN OUR ESTIMATION, TO THE SURE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT AS IS ANTICIPATED. THIS IS SO BECAUSE COL. MORT HAS, SINCE HIS APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF PROJECT UNTIL NOW, MANAGED TO UNDERSTAND, DEEPLY AND ACCURATELY, ALL THE FACTORS AND REQUIREMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT. HE HAS ALSO, THROUGH DAILY DEALINGS WITH THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROJECT AT THE NATIONAL GUARD, MANAGED TO ACHIEVE NOTICEABLE PROGRESS IN THE WAY OF RESOLVING QUESTIONS WHICH CAME UP AND CONTINUING THE NECESSARY COORDINATION - WHICH ARE CONSIDERED OF GREAT USEFULNESS AND ONE OF THE
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BASIC FACTORS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

WHICH OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE ANXIOUS TO SEE REALIZED.
THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW DIRECTOR WOULD OF NECESSITY RE-
QUIRE A LONG TIME FOR ADJUSTMENT AND COMPATIBILITY.

"WE APPRECIATE THAT THE SERVICES OF ANY MILITARY PER-
SON IN THE PROJECT ARE LINKED TO RULES AND REGULATIONS
OBSERVED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT'S DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. HOW-
EVERN, WE HOPE AT THE SAME TIME THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE EVELOPMENT PROJECT AT THE U.S. DOD WOULD APPRECI-
ATE THE EXCEPTIONS NECESSITATED BY SITUATIONS LIKE THIS
ONE.

"THIS IS WHY WE WISH YOU COULD EMPHASIZE TO YOUR
GOVERNMENT OUR INSISTENT DESIRE TO RETAIN COL. MORT AS
DIRECTOR OF THE PROJECT OFFICE UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF
ITS EXECUTION AT THE END OF THE PRESCRIBED FIVE AND ONE-
HALF YEARS.

"A FAVORABLE DETERMINATION WOULD BE APPRECIATED BY
US IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO IT.

"OUR GREETINGS. ABDULLAH BIN ABD AL-AZIZ."

2. AS YOU KNOW, I ASKED SOME MOths AGO THAT COL. MORT BE
EXTENDED AND STILL BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE HIGHLY
DESIRABLE. THIS WOULD INSURE CONTINUITY OF LEADERSHIP
DURING THIS CRITICAL EARLY STAGE OF THE PROGRAM.

3. I REALIZE THAT THIS IS A LAST-MINUTE ATTEMPT BY
PRINCE ABDULLAH BUT IT IS NOT A NEW ONE. HE HAS ALWAYS
SAID HE WANTED COL. MORT TO REMAIN. I WOULD BE PLEASED IF
DOD COULD BE RESPONSIVE, PARTICULARLY IN THE LIGHT OF
THE IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO THE MATTER BY PRINCE ABDULLAH.
AKINS

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